BOROUGH OF DUNHEVED OTHERWISE LAUNCESTON.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR

1951.

Health Area Office,
Castle Green,
LAUNCESTON.
Cornwall.

W.H.P. Minto, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.
Medical Officer of Health.

To the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors of the
Borough of Danheved otherwise Launceston.

Mr Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors,

I have the honour to present the Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health on the health and sanitary Circumstances of the Borough for the year 1951.

The health of the people in the Borough as far as can be judged by vital statistics has remained satisfactory. It is important that too much weight should not be attached to small variations in these rates from one year to another, particularly where relatively small populations are involved - attention should rather be paid to the trend of these rates over a period of years.

One always finds some difficulty when writing these Annual Reports in trying to project oneself into the past while working in the present, and planning for the future. As I took up my appointment in April 1952 I find these mental acrobatics particularly confusing on the present occasion and this 1951 report must, therefore, of necessity be mainly statistical.

I wish to thank Mr Till for the assistance he has given me in the preparation of Sections C, D and E of this report.

I have the honour to be

Your obedient servant,

W.H.P. Minto

Medical Officer of Health

Health Area Office,
Castle Green,
Launceston.

September, 1952

SECTION A

Social conditions of Area and Statistics

Summary of Vital Statistics	1951	1950
Area in Acres	2182	2182
Population	4516	4624
Number of separate dwellings occupied in 1951	1520	1413
Rateable value in 1951	£42,274	£41,600
Product of 1d rate	£171.1.9.81d	£169.2.0.

Live Births	Male	Female	TOTAL
Legitimate	14(32)	17(27)	31(59)
Illegitimate	3(1)	2(2)	5(3)

Birth rate per 1000 of population	7.97	(13.40)
Birth rate for England & Wales	15.50	(15.80)

Stillbirths	Male	Female	TOTAL
Legitimate	-(-)	-(1)	-(1)
Illegitimate	-(-)	-(-)	-(-)

Deaths of infants under 1year	Male	Female	TOTAL
Legitimate	1(-)	-(-)	1(-)
Illegitimate	-(-)	-(-)	-(-)

Infant mortality rate	27.77	(-)
Infant mortality rate for England & Wales	29.60	(29.80)

Deaths of all causes	Male	Female	TOTAL
	33(28)	37(40	70(68)

Death rate per 1000 population	15.50	(14.70)
Death rate for England & Wales	12.50	(11.60)

(Figures in brackets are for the year 1950)

MORTALITY TABLE

Classified in accordance with 36 headings based on the Abbreviated List of the International Statistical Classifications of Diseases, Injuries and Causes of Death, 1948

	Cause of Death	Male	Female	TOTAL
1.	Tuberculosis, respiratory	-(-)	-(1)	-(1)
2.	Tuberculosis, other	-(-)	-(-)	-(-)
3.	Syphilitic disease	-(-)	-(-)	-(-)
4.	Diphtheria	-(-)	-(-)	-(-)
5.	Whooping Cough	-(-)	-(-)	-(-)
6.	Menigococal infections	-(-)	-(-)	-(-)
7.	Acute Poliomyelitis	-(-)	-(-)	-(-)
8.	Measles	-(-)	-(-)	-(-)
9.	Other infective and parasite disease	-(-)	-(-)	-(-)
10.	Malignant neoplasm, stomach	4(-)	2(1)	6(1)
11.	Malignant neoplasm, lung bronchus	-(1)	-(1)	-(2)
12.	Malignant neoplasm, breast	-(-)	1(2)	1(2)
13.	Malignant neoplasm, uterus	-(-)	1(1)	1(1)
14.	Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms	3(3)	2(4)	5(7)
15.	Leukaemia, aleukaemia	-(-)	1(-)	1(-)
16.	Diabetes	1(1)	1(-)	2(1)
17.	Vascular lesions of nervous system	3(2)	9(5)	12(7)
18.	Coronary disease, angina	4(2)	1(4)	5(6)
19.	Hypertension with heart disease	2(1)	2(2)	4(3)
20.	Other heart disease	5(5)	8(3)	13(8)
21.	Other circulatory disease	1(1)	-(2)	1(3)
22.	Influenza	1(-)	-(1)	1(1)
23.	Pneumonia	-(2)	1(2)	1(4)
24.	Bronchitis	2(2)	3(-)	5(2)
25.	Other diseases of respiratory system	1(-)	-(1)	1(1)
26.	Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	-(2)	-(-)	-(2)
27.	Gastritis enteritis and diarrhoea	-(-)	1(-)	1(-)
28.	Nephritis and nephrosis	-(-)	-(-)	-(-)
29.	Hyperplasia of prostate	-(1)	-(-)	-(1)
30.	Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	-(-)	-(-)	-(-)
31.	Congenital malformations	-(-)	-(-)	-(-)
32.	Other defined and ill-defined diseases	5(4)	4(10)	9(14)
33.	Motor vehicle accidents	-(-)	-(-)	-(-)
34.	All other accidents	-(1)	-(-)	-(1)
35.	Suicide	-(-)	-(-)	-(-)
36.	Homicide and operations of war.	1(-)	-(-)	1(-)
		33(28)	37(40)	70(68)

(Figures in brackets are for the year 1950)

SECTION B

LABORATORY FACILITIES

As outlined in previous reports, the free use of the Public Health Laboratories are always available either at Exeter or Truro. In the main, most of the specimens from this district are dealt with at Exeter, and I should like to take the opportunity here of thanking Dr B. Moore, who is in charge of this laboratory, for the excellence of his work and the ready help he always gives.

CLINIC FACILITIES.

Infant Welfare Clinic

A fortnightly Infant Welfare Clinic is held at the Castle Green, Launceston and continues to provide a much valued service. Number of attendances during the year 1951 was 532 compared with 500 in 1950.

It is mainly in the Preventive aspect of medicine that we concentrate on here at the Clinic. This involves a good deal of personally conducted Health education to the mother on how to handle and bring up her infant. There is no immediate yard stick for measuring the value of this work or its results, but from the regularity of attendance of the mothers with their babies, it is obvious that they appreciate an opportunity to discuss the particular and general aspect of good health. It shouldbe realised that when a mother calls in a doctor to see her sick child, she is in no condition at that time to be informed on how the trouble could have been avoided. The work at the Clinics supplements the work of the District Nurses which is the mainstay of this scheme for Preventive Medicine. In their daily work they visit all homes where there are babies and young children and their timely advice and help does much to prevent serious illness developing.

Eye Clinic

An Eye Specialist from Plymouth holds anEye Clinic for school children and children under school age at the Health Area Office. This Clinic is arranged as and when a suitable number of children becomes available and the fact that this Clinic is held regularly is a considerable saving in time and expense, otherwise these children would have to be transported to Plymouth.

Dental Clinic

During the year there was no full-time School Dentist in the area and there can be little doubt that this difficulty in obtaining the services of a full-time school dentist is due to the inequality of remuneration between general dental practice and the Local Authority service. The full results of such a lack cannot be assessed for a number of years and undoubtedly it will be again some years before a cure can be effected even if the services of a dentist are to be obtained in the near future.

Ambulance Service

The Ambulance Service was heavily engaged during the year. The main Hospital centres are situated up to 25/30 miles from the Borough which necessitates a large amount of travelling.

To give the Council some indication of the work and mileage involved, the Launceston Ambulances during 1951 conveyed 958 patients a distance of 35,200 miles.

It is not possible to separate out precisely the individual journeys to hospital from the Borough, but over the whole Area, which includes Bude, Stratton, Launceston and Camelford, the number of patients conveyed during the year was 1491, a distance of 65,321 miles, or an average of 43¾ miles per patient. From these figures the Council will realise the great disadvantage we experience owing to our remoteness from hospital and treatment centres, and why it is recommended that the local hospital should be developed as much as possible to give the public more facilities.

Hospital Car Service.

Much of what has been said about the Ambulance Service applies to the Hospital Car Service. The Utilecon Ambulance which is situated in Launceston for conveying the sitting type of case has been a most valuable asset in the district. In addition to the use of this vehicle, we also use private cars to convey cases to hospital where this is appropriate.

The Launceston Utilecon Ambulance during the year 1951 conveyed 2,470 patients a distance of 66,166 miles, to hospital. Here again private cars and Utilecons have to be brought in from other stations to cope with the work of the whole district.

In order that the Council may have some idea of the work done for the sitting type of case, the number of patients conveyed to hospital for the whole area was 5,002, a distance of 150,419 miles, or an average of 30 miles per patient. Here again, if more local facilities were provided, a great saving in transport could be effected.

REGIONAL HOSPITAL BOARD.

A Maternity Home is to be provided for the use of patients in this area at Old Tree House, Trebursye, near Launceston. It seems likely that this Home will be ready for use early in 1952.

SECTION C

Sanitary Circumstances

Drains of existing buildings were tested as required. All new drains were tested by water or smoke.

Reports on the Sewage Works effluent have remained generally poor but the position has not worsened owing to the continued use of chemicals. Further discussion concerning the proposed new Sewage Disposal Scheme have taken place with Ministry experts, resulting in the employment of a Consulting Engineer to report upon the existing works and to make proposals for a new scheme.

Water

The Chlorination Plant is working effectively and a residual of 0.3 cls.per mill. is being maintained.

Seven samples were taken:

Four of the Town's main supply (all Class 1.)
Two of shallow wells (both unsatisfactory)
One of the swimming bath (good)

Routine Inspections

	No.in Area	Visits.	Defects found.	Defects remedied
Bakehouses	5	12	2	2
Butchers	9	30	2	2
Cafes	13	39	3	3
Dairies	2	31	1	1
Egg Packing Stn.	2	2	1	1
Factories	81	53	4	4
Fishmongers				
(a) Wet	2	8	-	-
(b) Fried	3	15	-	-
Grocers	20	52	2	2
Ice-Cream				
(a) Manufacturers	1	24	1	1
(b) Retailers	16	16	-	-
Pork Butchers	2	7	-	-
Poulterers	2	2	-	-
Shops	160	20	-	-

SECTION D

Housing

Post-war housing - completed during 1951	19
Under construction at the end of the year	18
Total number of post-war houses completed since 1945	
Permanent	59
Temporary	39
Number of applicants on Housing Waiting List	142

SECTION E

Inspection and supervision of Food

Milk Supplies and Control

There are two registered Dairies in the Borough and five registered Distributors of milk.

Pasteurised	1
Accredited	1
Ungraded	3

24 milk samples were taken for bacteriological analysis, viz.

	Pasteurised	Accredited	Ungraded
No. of samples	2	6 2 failed	16 2 failed

Ice Cream

There is one producer in the Borough, and sixteen retailers. 26 ice cream samples were taken for bacteriological analysis.
Of these 18 were Grade 1 (Satisfactory)
3 were Grade 2 (fair)
3 were Grade 3 (unsatisfactory)
2 were Grade 4 (very bad)

Unsound Food

52 visits were made in order to condemn canned and other foodstuffs.

Meat Inspection

The following animals were killed at the Launceston Abbatoir.

	No. killed	Number Condemned	
		T.B.	All Causes
Cattle	2081	61(2.93%)	141(7%)
Calves	3268	14(0.43%)	48(1.4%)
Sheep	5552	-	215(3.8%)
Pigs	1263	11(0.8%)	32(2.5%)

Causes of condemnation of entire carcases

Disease	Cattle	Calves	Sheep	Pigs
Generalised Tuberculosis	61	14	-	11
Oedema	58	-	121	-
Septicaemia	13	2	77	11
Septic Metritis	1	-	-	1
Pyaemia	4	7	5	-
Uraemia	-	-	6	2
Immaturity	-	23	-	-
Acute Swine Erysipelas	-	-	-	5
Acute Bacterial Necrosis	1	-	-	-
Acute Enteritis	1	-	-	2
Icterus	1	-	1	-
Moribund	-	1	5	-
Black Quarter	1	-	-	-
Multiple Injuries	-	1	-	-
TOTAL	141	48	215	32

Also 40,829 lbs of offal and part carcases were condemned.

16 cases of Cysticercus Bovis were found.

Work is to start on the abattoir improvements in February of 1952.

Rats and Mice Destruction

All complaints were investigated by test-baiting and inspection of the premises concerned and its immediate surroundings. Where test-baiting revealed the presence of rats, pre-baiting and poisoning was carried out. After a lapse of a week or so, post-baiting was carried out to assess the success of the treatment. Mice were dealt with by direct poisoning.

Premises treated	57
No. of visits	228
Poisons used	
Arsenic	5 ozs
Red Squill	20 ozs
Zinc Phosphide	7 ozs.

Council premises treated	40
No. of visits	160
Poisons used	
Arsenic	11 ozs
Zinc Phosphide	10 ozs.

Nuisances and Defects remedied during the year

Statutory Notices served

Dangerous buildings	2
Water Act 1945	1
Housing Act 1936, Closing Orders	2

Informal Notices served

Keeping of animals	1
Defective Sanitary Accommodation	2
Obstructed drains	8
Defective drains	4
Overflowing cess-pool	1
Food & Drugs Act 1938, Sec.13	1
General Defects	14

Total number of complaints received 47

Total number of visits made 1,659

Refuse and Salvage Collection

This has proceeded satisfactorily. 53 tons 10 cwt. of Waste Paper was collected and despatched to the mills for pulping.

No nuisance at the Slate Quarry.

SECTION F

Prevalence and Control of Infectious and other Diseases.

Notification of the following cases of infectious disease was received during the year.

AUTHORITY	Whooping Cough	Measles	Scarlet Fever	Pneumonia	Erysipelas	Diphtheria	Poliomyelitis (Paralytic)	Poliomyelitis (non-paralytic)	Food poisoning	Dysentery	Rheumatism (children)	Pyrexia	TOTAL
Launceston Borough	17	107	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	127
Bude/Stratton Urban District	3	123	3	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	137
Stratton Rural District	14	68	1	11	4	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	101
Launceston Rural District	15	42	3	3	-	1	1	-	-	-	1	-	66
Camelford Rural District	2	27	6	5	-	-	-	-	4	11	-	-	55
TOTAL	51	367	13	27	6	2	2	1	4	11	1	1	486

POLIOMYELITIS

No case of poliomyelitis was notified during the year

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION & VACCINATION

During the year 1951 the number of Diphtheria Immunisations and Vaccinations in the whole area wereL

Authority	Immunisation	Boosters	Vaccinations
Launceston Borough	77	59	37(10
Bude/Stratton Urban District	67	149	71(28)
Stratton Rural District	75	62	47(13)
Launceston Rural District	78	113	44(5)
Camelford Rural District	96	198	57(9)

(figures in brackets represent re-Vaccination)

TUBERCULOSIS

	Males		Females	
	Pul.	Non.Pul	Pul.	Non.Pul
Cases on Register at 31.12.50	12	2	8	5
No. of cases notified during the year	-	1	1	-
No. of cases restores in the year	-	-	-	-
Inward transfers	-	-	-	-
Cases removed	3	-	3	-
Cases on register at 31.12.51	9	3	6	5

No action was found to be necessary under the Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1925, in connection with persons suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis employed in the milk trade, or under Section 172, of the Public Health Act, 1936 which deals with the compulsory removal to hospital of persons suffering from tuberculosis.

The preventive aspect of this disease is now being seriously tackled. All contacts of cases of Tuberculosis are tested by means of special skin tests, and if suitable, will be protected against Tuberculosis by the use of B.C.G. Vaccine. This Vaccine is a modified form of the Tuberculosis germ which is harmless in itself, but when injected is capable of enabling any individual to resist the disease.

DIPHTHERIA

No cases were notified during the year.